

IKWUEZUNMA RECIEVES  
PRESTIGIOUS FULLBRIGHT AWARD

**HON. PETE OLSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 2017*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ijezie Ikwuezunma of Richmond, TX, for receiving a Fulbright award to do research in the UK.

Ijezie, a student at Washington and Lee University, was awarded a Fulbright grant for his project, "Cardiovascular Pharmacogenomics and Pharmacokinetics of Warfarin (an oral anti-coagulant)." His research will be based around cardiovascular agents and their pharmacology, with a particular focus on the drug warfarin. While completing his Fulbright, Ijezie will also be pursuing his Masters of Research in biomedical sciences and transnational medicine at the University of Liverpool. Each year the Fulbright Program grants students the opportunity to study, research or teach English abroad in an effort to internationalize communities and campuses around the world. Fulbright scholars focus on the conditions and challenges differing regions face, as well as building valuable US relationships.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Ijezie for receiving this Fulbright award. Keep up the great work.

RECOGNIZING MIKE MILLER, NEW  
U.S. WHEAT ASSOCIATES CHAIRMAN

**HON. DAN NEWHOUSE**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 2017*

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a constituent from my district, Mike Miller, of Ritzville, Washington, who was recently selected as the new Chairman of the U.S. Wheat Associates.

Mike is a fourth-generation farmer and a family man who has served on many local, state and national boards. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Washington Grain Commission and has been representing Washington as a U.S. Wheat Associates Director for six years.

He has been very active in supporting wheat research and development, and I know he will be an excellent leader for the U.S. Wheat Associates, as they continue to promote the quality and value of all six U.S. wheat classes to international markets.

Please join me in congratulating Mike on his new position.

OPPOSING PROPOSED LEGISLATION THAT THREATENS THE  
BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE  
AREA WILDERNESS

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 2017*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD my letter to the Chairman and

Ranking Member of the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee. The letter expresses my strong opposition to a discussion draft the Committee held a hearing on this week, proposed by Representative TOM EMMER, that would undercut existing environmental and public lands laws to allow a Chilean mining conglomerate to conduct dangerous sulfide-ore coppering mining adjacent to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, July 27, 2017.

Hon. PAUL GOSAR,  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals, House Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

Hon. ALAN LOWENTHAL,  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals, House Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOSAR AND RANKING MEMBER LOWENTHAL: I write to express my strong opposition to the discussion draft proposed by Representative Tom Emmer considered today, July 27, in the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee. This proposed legislation would undercut existing environmental and public lands laws to allow a Chilean mining conglomerate to conduct dangerous sulfide-ore coppering mining adjacent to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Located in northeastern Minnesota along the United States' border with Canada, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) comprises approximately 1.1 million acres of unspoiled woodlands and more than 1,000 pristine lakes. It is home to iconic species such as loons, moose, and lynx, while the waters support thriving populations of walleye, bass, and trout.

Congress recognized the value of this unique national treasure when it passed the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act in 1978. This critical legislation established necessary protections for the BWCAW, prohibiting logging and mining and placing limits on the use of motorized vehicles to preserve the unspoiled nature of this special area.

That law strengthened the federal role as caretaker of this area of unparalleled natural beauty, and in doing so built upon more than a century of actions by federal and state governments. In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt created the Superior National Forest to protect the surrounding area. In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into law, and set aside one million acres of the Boundary Waters as a wilderness area. In 1976, the state of Minnesota banned mining on state lands within the Boundary Waters.

These policies have ensured that Minnesota's Boundary Waters are one of the few remaining wild places in the United States.

The BWCAW does not exist in isolation, however. It is a critical part of a vast, interconnected watershed that flows through the Superior National Forest and into Voyageurs National Park and Canada's Quetico Provincial Park. While the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Act of 1978 prohibited mining within the Boundary Waters itself, it did not address existing mineral leases located within the parts of the watershed in the Superior National Forest.

In 2011, Chilean mining conglomerate Antofagasta announced plans for its Twin Metals sulfide-ore copper mine on federal land within this watershed. Antofagasta planned to pursue this mining under mineral leases issued in 1966, before the enactment of

modern environmental legislation such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the Clean Water Act. However, those leases expired in 2014, requiring Antofagasta to apply for a renewal.

Under the terms of the leases, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) reviewed and denied those renewals in December 2016, based on a denial of consent from the United States Forest Service (USFS). The USFS determined that copper-sulfide ore mining on these leases would pose an unacceptable risk that "might cause serious and irreplaceable harm to this unique, iconic, and irreplaceable wilderness area".

Sulfide-ore mining is the most toxic industry in America, polluting waterways with acid drainage that contains arsenic, mercury and lead.

Researchers that surveyed sulfide-ore copper mines in North America found that every mine had leached pollution into surrounding water, with 92 percent failing to contain mine seepage and seriously affecting water quality. Underscoring the danger of sulfide-ore copper mining, the failure of the Mount Polley copper mine in British Columbia in August 2014 released a toxic slurry of 10 billion liters of wastewater and 5 billion liters of solid tailings. This immense pollution destroyed the surrounding landscape and permanently damaged an irreplaceable salmon spawning area.

Simply put, sulfide-ore copper mining is not suited in the vast, interconnected watershed that contains the BWCA, which is exactly why the BLM and USFS determined that the sustainable management of the forests, lakes and streams in this area was best served by not renewing Antofagasta's leases.

This decision was also supported with action taken by the state government. In March 2016, Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton directed the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources "not to authorize or enter into any new state access agreements or lease agreements for mining operations" on state lands in close proximity to the BWCAW.

Following the denial of the leases, the USFS submitted an application to the Secretary of the Interior to withdraw portions of the watershed that flows into the BWCAW from future mineral permits and leases, to remove the threat of sulfide-ore mining throughout this sensitive landscape. Today, the USFS and the BLM are conducting a thorough environmental analysis to determine whether the lands should be withdrawn from mineral leasing for a period of 20 years. In addition to relying on sound science, this review includes input from the public and key stakeholders. In just the past two weeks, more than 1,500 people have attended public meetings held by the USFS in Virginia, Minnesota and St. Paul, Minnesota.

This environmental review and public input process is the best path forward, as Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue affirmed to me during a hearing of the House Interior-Environment Appropriations Subcommittee on May 27, 2017. In response to a question about the study, Secretary Perdue responded: "We are determined to proceed in that effort and let it run its course. No decision will be made prior to the conclusion of that."

Unfortunately, the discussion draft presented by Representative Emmer entirely short-circuits this careful and deliberate review process, recklessly overturns the science-based denial of consent decision from the USFS, and attacks existing environmental and public lands laws—all for the benefit of a foreign conglomerate's mining project.

I have several serious concerns about the far-reaching impacts of the discussion draft presented by Representative Emmer: